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United States Department of Agriculture

Office of Information

Selected Speeches and News Releases

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USDA PREPARES TO HANDLE ANIMAL DAMAGE CONTROL PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Jan. 6—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is preparing to assume direction of the animal damage control program, a cooperative federal-state program which helps prevent and control damage by wildlife to agricultural crops and livestock.

The program has been managed by the U.S. Department of the Interior since 1939. However, Congress recently voted to transfer the program, its resources and personnel to USDA.

Bert W. Hawkins, administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, said his agency is assuming responsibility for the program from the Interior Department's Fish and Wildlife Service.

"Our immediate aim is a smooth and orderly transfer," said Hawkins. "I have named James O. Lee Jr., my deputy administrator, to manage the program. Both the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service have set up transition teams to handle the details of the transfer, which should be completed by April 1."

Hawkins said the animal damage control program fits in well with his agency's role of protecting American agriculture.

"Annual losses to agriculture from depredating animals—such as blackbirds, rodents and coyotes—have been estimated at more than $300 million," said Hawkins. "Measures to control such damage by wildlife animals must be environmentally and biologically sound, as well as economically feasible."

Hawkins said an advisory committee would be appointed to provide policy and program guidance to the Secretary of Agriculture and to serve as a public forum on animal damage control issues. The committee will include representatives of conservation, agricultural and scientific organizations.

The federal share of the cooperative program's funding is currently about $20 million.

#

USDA TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY FEED ASSISTANCE TO DISASTER AREAS

WASHINGTON, Jan. 6—Secretary of Agriculture John Block announced today that the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service will be moving approved Commodity Credit Corporation-owned grain into areas eligible for ASCS's Emergency Feed Assistance Program.

"A combination of an unusually dry summer plus grasshopper infestation drastically reduced summer grass and sharply cut production of winter forage," Block said. "Then, one of the earliest and most severe winters on record has caused further hardship."

Block said an amendment to the Food Security Act of 1985 provides that the Commodity Credit Corporation will bear any expenses, including transportation and handling, incurred in connection with making available CCC-owned commodities to eligible producers to alleviate emergency situations.

"These are producers in counties that have been designated eligible for emergency Farmers Home Administration loans or designated especially by the Secretary of Agriculture for the Emergency Feed Assistance Program," Block said. "Either designation means grain will be made available as soon as possible to eligible producers."

Areas designated as eligible through today included portions of North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana and Wyoming, with additional areas expected to be added in the near future.

All grades of grain will be included. Previously, grain available under the program was limited to grades 4, 5 and sample. Block said eligible farmers and ranchers may apply at their county Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation offices to purchase the grain at 75 percent of the county loan rate.

#

PHILIPPINES TARGETED FOR WHEAT EXPORT ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Jan. 6—Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block today announced that a wheat offer to the Philippines will be the fifteenth initiative under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Export Enhancement Program. As with previous announcements under this program, sales will be made at competitive world prices.

Block said this program will give U.S. exporters the opportunity to sell up to 150,000 metric tons of wheat, including a Commodity Credit Corporation bonus in the form of wheat to be provided to U.S. exporters from CCC stocks. The CCC bonus will enable U.S. exporters to compete at commercial prices in the Philippine market in response to future tenders for wheat.

For further information call William R. Randolph, (202) 382-9254 or Larry T. McElvain (202) 447-6225

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USDA REVISES RULES ON AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT CERTIFICATES

WASHINGTON, Jan. 7—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today revised its rules for issuing federal agricultural certificates for products graded or certified under meat grading and certification regulations. The new regulations allow for the issuance of weekly agricultural product certificates instead of the current daily and biweekly certificates.

Paul M. Fuller, an official with USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service in Washington, D.C., said this change will reduce certificate preparation time and facilitate the implementation of the agency's updated automated data processing program. Fuller also said this change will result in cost savings that will enable the agency to provide more cost-effective service to the meat industry.

Agricultural product certificates are official notices that meat and meat products comply with all federal standards, specifications and regulations. Additionally, these certificates are used in assessing charges for meat grading and certification by the Agricultural Marketing

Service. Meat grading and certification are voluntary services provided to meatpackers and processors for a fee that is required by law to be approximately equal to the cost of providing the services.

The new rule was published today in the Federal Register. Copies may be obtained from Livestock & Seed Division, room 2638-S, Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250.

#

REVISED CHARTER SIGNED FOR INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE AND EDUCATION COUNCIL

WASHINGTON, Jan. 8—Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block and university representatives signed a revised 5-year charter for the International Science and Education Council in a ceremony at the U.S. Department of Agriculture today.

The original ISEC agreement of 1974 included USDA and the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges. The revised charter, signed today, also includes the American Association of State Colleges and Universities as a full partner in the Council. ISEC encourages collaborative efforts in international agriculture among member organizations.

"Over the years," Block said, "ISEC has increased the university community's role in USDA international research and education programs."

Signing the new charter with Block were Robert Clodius, president of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, and Alan Ostar, president of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. The new charter seeks to strengthen and expand cooperation between USDA and the universities in international agricultural science and technology programs.

ISEC membership includes university representatives and officials from USDA, under the leadership of Co-Chairs appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture and the President of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges. Four standing committees operate under the Council: the International Research Committee, Committee on Training, Technical Assistance Committee,

and Committee on Scientific and Technical Exchange. Meetings are held on a biannual basis.

For more information on the council contact Barbara Burton, ISEC Coordinator, USDA's Office of International Cooperation, Room 4102-AUD.

#

1984 FARM POPULATION STABLE AT 5.75 MILLION

WASHINGTON, Jan. 10—Approximately 5.75 million people lived on U.S. farms in 1984—about 33,000 less than in 1983, according to the Commerce Department's Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service. The decline is not significant, according to Census and ERS demographers, and may be due to statistical sampling errors. Changes in the past few years have been similarly minor.

About 1 of every 41 persons, or 2.4 percent of the Nation's population, lived on a farm in 1984, according to "Farm Population of the United States: 1984," Series P-27, No. 58, releases Jan. 10 by the Census Bureau and USDA.

The Midwest maintained the largest share of farm residents, with 44 percent of them in 1984. The South ranked second with 36 percent, followed by the West with 15 percent and the Northeast with 6 percent.

Farm residents had proportionately more whites, males, and married couples than the nonfarm population. Their median age of 35.5 years exceeded the 31 years for nonfarm residents.

Farm families generally have lower incomes than those elsewhere. Their median income of $18,925 in 1983 was three-fourths of the nonfarm median of $23,751. Nearly 21 percent of all farm families had incomes below the poverty level, compared with 12 percent for nonfarm families. These income and poverty estimates are based on money income alone and do not include the value of noncash benefits.

Only 3 percent of the farm resident labor force was unemployed in 1984, compared with 7.7 percent of the nonfarm labor force. Although employed farm residents overall were about equally divied between

agricultural and nonagricultural jobs, 62 percent of farm men worked in agriculture while 71 percent of farm women had nonagricultural jobs.

These data, derived from the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey, are subject to sampling variability and errors of response, including underreporting and nonreporting. For more details on the farm population, telephone Judith Kalbacher of ERS, (202) 786-1534 or Diana DeAre, Census Bureau, (202) 763-7955.

#

USDA ANNOUNCES FINAL 1986 PEANUT POUNDAGE QUOTA

WASHINGTON, Jan. 8—Secretary of Agriculture John Block today announced a national poundage quota of 1,355,500 short tons (2,711 million pounds) for the 1986 crop of peanuts, up 255,500 short tons (511 million pounds) from the 1985 level.

As required by the Food Security Act of 1985, the national poundage quota for the 1986 crop of peanuts is equal to the quantity of peanuts estimated to be devoted to domestic edible, seed and related use in the 1986 marketing year, beginning Aug. 1, 1986.

The 1986 national poundage quota will be allocated to each state based on each state's percentage share of the 1985 poundage quota. Any increase in a state's poundage quota will be allocated equally among farms producing quota and nonquota peanuts.

Secretary Block also rescinded the national acreage allotment of 1,610,000 acres and the national marketing quota of 2,142,105 tons proclaimed for the 1986 crop of peanuts on Nov. 14, 1985. The legislative provisions upon which these decisions were based were suspended by the Food Security Act of 1985.

Block also announced that peanut growers will vote Jan. 27-31 in a mail referendum to decide whether poundage quotas and price supports will continue for peanut crops for the next five years. The Secretary is required to conduct the referendum not later than Dec. 15. However, since the 1985 law was not enacted until Dec. 23, the referendum will be held in January

If two-thirds or more of the producers voting favor poundage quotas, no referendum will be held for the second, third, fourth and fifth years of the period and quotas and price supports will remain in effect for the 1986 through 1990 crops of peanuts. If more than one-third of the producers vote against quotas, poundage quotas and price supports will not be in effect for the 1986 crop of peanuts.

Producers are eligible to vote if they were engaged in the production of quota peanuts in 1985. Producers ineligible to vote are those whose only interest in peanut production in 1985 was on a farm on which: (1) the acres harvested for nuts was one acre or less; (2) there was no poundage quota; or, (3) the production was for consumption exclusively as boiled peanuts.

In the 1982 referendum, 93.9 percent of the 38,755 peanut growers voting favored poundage quotas for the 1982, 1983, 1984 and 1985 crops.

#

USDA DRAFTS SUPPLEMENT TO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR GRASSHOPPER CONTROL

WASHINGTON, Jan. 8—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today issued a draft supplement to the Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Rangeland Grasshopper Cooperative Management Program.

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service helps control grasshoppers and Mormon crickets on western rangeland. According to Bert W. Hawkins, APHIS administrator, the agency participates with Western States and landowners in carrying out surveys to determine where economically damaging infestations are likely to occur and, upon request, treatments to control them.

The draft supplement to the impact statement discusses several management alternatives and the rationale for the preferred alternative. The original environmental impact statement was issued in July 1980.

Notice of availability of the supplement will be published Jan. 9 in the Federal Register. Written comments on the supplement may be sent by Feb. 24 to Charles H. Bare, Field Operations Support Staff, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Room 663, Federal

Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782. Comments should state that they are in response to docket number 85-363.

Copies of the draft supplement are available by mail from Mr. Bare or from the office of Plant Protection and Quarantine, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Room 302-E, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250.

#

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO GRAIN INSPECTION REGULATIONS WOULD ALLOW CIVIL PENALTIES

WASHINGTON, Jan. 8—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has proposed amending its grain inspection regulations by adding provisions for assessing and collecting civil penalties.

According to officials of USDA's Federal Grain Inspection Service, the proposal would give the agency regulatory authority to impose civil penalties against persons who knowingly violate provisions of the U.S. Grain Standards Act, or who have been convicted of any violation of federal law regarding the handling, weighing or inspection of grain.

In addition, the proposal would incorporate other miscellaneous changes in federal grain inspection regulations.

Public comments on the proposal may be submitted by Feb. 6 to Lewis Lebakken Jr., Information Resources Staff, Federal Grain Inspection Service, Room 0667-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250; (202) 382-1738. The proposal was published Jan. 7 in the Federal Register.

#

USDA CAUTIONS POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS IN DAIRY TERMINATION PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Jan. 9—Dairy farmers who anticipate submitting a bid to participate in the recently enacted milk production termination program should be advised that changes in the size and composition of their dairy herds may affect their eligibility for the program, Milton

Hertz, Acting Administrator of USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, said today.

The Food Security Act of 1985 provides that participants in the program give information on the size and composition of their dairy herds during a base period and the size and composition of their dairy herds at the time they submit a bid.

Under the program, producers may enter into contracts with the government by submitting bids to dispose of their dairy herds and terminate any interest they have in the production of milk. Producers who submit acceptable bids and who meet program requirements will receive payments from USDA.

#

USDA REVISES 1986 COUNTRY, COMMODITY ALLOCATIONS FOR FOOD FOR PEACE PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Jan. 9—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today issued its revised country and commodity allocations for fiscal 1986 under Titles I and III of Public Law 480—the Food for Peace Program.

Under Secretary of Agriculture Daniel Amstutz said current program plans provide for distribution of $946.7 million in commodity shipments, changed from $950 million the previous quarter. Of the current amount, $846.7 million is presently allocated and $100 million is being held in a reserve to furnish commodities for unforeseen needs during the remainder of the fiscal year. An estimated $3.3 million has been designated to be used for ocean-freight financing for Somalia.

The revised allocations meet the legal requirement of Section III of P.L. 480, which directs that not less than 75 percent of food-aid commodities be allocated to friendly countries that meet the International Development Association's poverty criterion. Currently, the countries in this category are those with an annual per capita gross national product of $790 or less.

Amstutz said the program takes into account many variables including commodity and budget availabilities; changing economic and foreign policy situations, including human rights assessments; potential for market development; fluctuations in commodity prices; availability

of handling, storage and distribution facilities; and possible disincentives to local production.

Except for agreements already signed, these allocations represent neither final U.S. commitments nor agreements with participating governments. Situations still may develop which could cause a further change in country and commodity allocations, Amstutz said.

Title I of P.L. 480 is a concessional sales program designed to promote exports of agricultural commodities from the United States and to foster economic development in recipient countries. The program provides loans of up to 40 years. with a grace period of up to 10 years and low interest rates.

Title III provides for the forgiveness of the debt incurred under Title I, based on accomplishments in food for development programs and projects agreed upon by the United States and recipient countries.

Additional technical information on the P.L. 480 program is available from Mary Chambliss of USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, (202) 447-3573.

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WIC STUDY RESULTS RELEASED

WASHINGTON, Jan. 10—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today released the results of a five-year study assessing the effectiveness of the special supplemental food program for Women, Infants and Children.

Objectives of the study included an assessment of the effect of the WIC Program on pregnant women in terms of pregnancy outcomes, nutritional status, dietary intake, and utilization of health care. The study also examined the effect of WIC on children including growth, dietary intake and utilization of health care. Forty-nine different indicators of program effectiveness were analyzed. Eight of these were subjected to multiple analysis.

WIC Program recipients receive a monthly package of food specifically tailored to their nutritional needs as well as nutrition education and referral to health care. In fiscal 1985, the WIC program cost approximately $1.5 billion and served more than 3.1 million people a month.

The study showed that the WIC Program increases the use of infant formula instead of cows' milk and improves some dietary factors of pregnant women's weight gain and use of prenatal care.

The study's findings on length of pregnancy and pregnancy outcomes were mixed. While results from one portion of the evaluation indicate WIC is effective in increasing the length of pregnancy by one day, and in reducing the likelihood of both premature delivery and fetal death, these results could not be confirmed by another portion of the evaluation. The study did not find consistent evidence that WIC increases the birthweight of infants as had been expected.

Assistant Secretary for Food and Consumer Services John W. Bode said "while the results are not as clear cut as we had expected, we are pleased at the indication that WIC has a positive effect on those who receive its benefits."

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AGRIBUSINESS WORKSHOP TO FOCUS ON NEW CARIBBEAN ALLIANCE FOR PROSPERITY

WASHINGTON, Jan. 13—Agricultural businesses from the Caribbean Basin region and Central America will have an opportunity to explore possible joint ventures with counterparts from the U.S. mainland and Puerto Rico at an Agribusiness Development Workshop in Dorado, Puerto Rico, June 22-25.

Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Agency for International Development, the workshop will be co-hosted by the Government of Puerto Rico and the Latin American Association of Financial Development Institutions. USDA's Office of International Cooperation and Development is coordinating the workshop activities.

The workshop, according to Governor Rafael Hernandez Colon of Puerto Rico, seeks "in the best traditions of American history and in the bright spirit of President Reagan's Caribbean Basin initiative to shape a new Caribbean alliance for prosperity."

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture John Block has consistently backed Caribbean Basin Initiative efforts and sees them as beneficial to businesses both in the United States and the Caribbean region. "In the long run, the Caribbean Basin Initiative will help the Caribbean nations become stronger trading partners with the United States," said Block.

The workshop in Puerto Rico will provide information to agricultural businessmen on how to put together a business plan involving investors from one or more countries and how to finance and assemble a deal. Discussions will also take place on how to tap into necessary technologies and support systems, analyze industrial capabilities and obtain financing outside of one's own country.

Case studies of successful business alliances among U.S., Caribbean and Central American entrepreneurs will be reviewed at the workshop to illustrate the potential of joint ventures and investment.

The workshop also will include exhibits related to agricultural production, investment opportunities, and the marketing potential of the Caribbean Basin's agricultural products.

Food brokers, importers and exporters, food processors, distributors, and suppliers, plus businesses involved in transportation, communications and storage, and individuals representing financial support services, are expected to take part in the workshop.

Information about participation in the Agribusiness Development Workshop may be obtained from Ms. Marcano, Government Development Bank for Puerto Rico, Box 42001, San Juan, Puerto Rico, 00940, (809) 722-4260 or 722-2525, Ext. 2156; or by contacting OICD's Private Sector Relations office in Washington, (202) 475-4191.

Exhibitors planning to bring exotic agricultural products to the workshop should obtain information on quarantine regulations. U.S. businesses should contact Pedro Ortiz, Sanidad Vegetal/Plant Quarantine, Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 10163, San Juan Puerto Rico 00908, (809) 724-4627. Non-U.S. businesses should contact Eric Colon of USDA's Plant Protection and Quarantine Office, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, at Luis Munoz International Airport, Isla Verde, Puerto Rico, 00913, (809) 791-0356 or 791-3214.

#

USDA ANNOUNCES NEW CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Jan. 13—Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block today said farmers may begin in early March to volunteer highly erodible cropland for entry into the Conservation Reserve Program, a provision of the Food Security Act of 1985.

Highly erodible land that enters the Conservation Reserve Program will be ineligible for farming for 10 years and must instead be planted with permanent vegetative cover.

"The Conservation Reserve is one of the most important provisions of the 1985 farm bill," said Block. "The program will go a long way toward conserving America's eroding farmland for the future."

Up to 45 million acres may be enrolled in the reserve during the five-year period, 1986 through 1990. The yearly program acreage goals are at least 5 million for the 1986 crop year, 10 million or more each year 1987 through 1989, and 5 million or more for 1990, according to Block.

Program participants will receive annual rental payments, the amounts depending on the bids per acre and the number of acres under the 10-year contracts. Participants also will receive 50 percent of eligible costs of establishing trees or grass on the acreage placed in the reserve.

Rental payments will compensate farmers for retiring highly erodible cropland from crop production. The conservation payments will partly reimburse farmers for one-half the one-time costs of establishing vegetative cover.

Rental payments will be made annually as soon as practicable after Oct. 1 of each calendar year. Cost-sharing payments will be made as soon as possible after individual participants report their conservation treatments are in place.

The total amount of rental payments for any fiscal year may not exceed $50,000 or its equivalent, if in-kind payments are made. There is no payment limit on cost-sharing for cover establishment.

"Farmers who decide to return land to production during the 10-year contract must repay the government, with interest, all of its costs for annual rental and for establishing cover," said Block. "In the event of national need, however, the Secretary of Agriculture may declare that any farmer who wants to return the land to production may do so without penalty."

The sign-up dates for the Conservation Reserve Program are expected to be announced soon. Farmers interested in participating in the program should contact their local office of USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

Block said other USDA agencies also will administer the program. Technicians from USDA's Soil Conservation Service will help farmers determine if their land is eligible; the Extension Service will lead public information and education efforts; and the Forest Service will coordinate and provide technical assistance for tree planting.

State and local agencies also will lend assistance, he said. State forestry agencies will help prepare and approve tree planting plans. State wildlife agency representatives will serve on the conservation review groups to recommend and assist in determining the cover practice specifications necessary for wildlife enhancement. State conservation agencies will recommend and assist with erosion control requirements. Local conservation districts will approve all plans.

#

SELECTED DAIRY HERD BUY-OUT DETERMINATIONS ANNOUNCED

WASHINGTON, Jan. 13—Some important details of the dairy herd buy-out program of the 1985 Farm Bill were announced today by Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block in order to give dairy producers additional time to begin analyzing the program.

Under the farm bill—the Food Security Act of 1985—a participating dairy producers would terminate milk production and sell for slaughter or export all dairy cattle (cows, heifers, and calves) in which the producer has an interest, the Secretary emphasized. The new act requires the Secretary to implement a milk production termination program by April 1, 1986.

"Although similar in some aspects, many provisions of the regulations being developed for this program will be quite different from the earlier milk diversion program," Secretary Block said.

The Secretary said dairy producers interested in participating in the program will submit a cwt-for-milk bid based on their base period milk marketings. If the bid is accepted, the producer will be required to stay out of dairying for five years and not use or allow the use of his facilities for milk production for the same time period.

To be eligible to bid, a producer at the time the bid is submitted must be actively engaged in the production and commercial marketing of milk.

Secretary Block stressed that any change in the composition of the dairy herd of a producer may affect eligibility for the program. He also emphasized that additional program determinations and implementing regulations will be annnounced at a later date.

Block explained that as background for a bid, producers will be required to submit evidence of the size and composition of their dairy herds (cows, heifers and calves) as of Jan. 1, 1985; and Jan. 1, 1986, and on the date that the bid is submitted.

The producer must submit monthly records of his milk marketings from July 1984 through December 1985. A producer's base period will be the lesser of the milk marketings for the 12-month period beginning July 1984 or January 1985, Secretary Block continued.

A producer may enter bids for one or more of the following time periods:

April 1, 1986 - Aug. 31, 1986
Sept. 1, 1986 - Feb. 28, 1987
March 1, 1987 - Aug. 31, 1987

The new statute gives the Secretary the authority to accept or reject any or all bids.

Successful bidders will be given the following options for receiving payments:

1. Equal annual payments.
2. No payment for first year. Thereafter, the producer has the option of equal annual payments or a payment not to exceed 85 percent of the contract amount for the second year, with the remainder of the payment made equally in annual payments.
3. Payment in the first year not to exceed 80 percent. Thereafter, the remainder will be paid in equal annual installments.

#

USDA ANNOUNCES 1986 COTTON, FEED GRAIN, RICE, WHEAT PROGRAMS

WASHINGTON, Jan. 13—Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block today announced provisions of the 1986 price support programs for upland cotton, feed grains, rice and wheat.

The programs include required acreage reductions of 20 percent for feed grains, 35 percent for rice, 25 percent for wheat, and 25 percent for cotton. Included in these reductions is a 2 1/2 percent paid land diversion for wheat and feed grain producers.

Signup for the farm programs is anticipated to begin in early March.

The 1986 loan rates (per bushel), will be $1.56 for barley, $1.92 for corn, $.99 for oats, $1.82 for sorghum, $1.63 for rye, and $2.40 for wheat. Loan rates for rice and cotton will be announced later.

Target prices will be the same in 1986 as were in effect for 1985 crops. They are (per bushel): barley, $2.60; corn, $3.03; oats, $1.60, sorghum, $2.88; wheat, $4.38.

Producers are eligible to earn deficiency payments on the acreage planted within the extent permitted. Producers who plant at least 50 percent of the permitted acreage to the program crop and plant the remaining permitted acreage to a non-program crop, other than soybeans or extra long staple cotton, will be eligible to receive deficiency payments on 92 percent of the permitted acreage.

Winter wheat producers who reduce the acreage planted to wheat on the farm for harvest so that it does not exceed 65 percent of the farm wheat base may be eligible to receive diversion payments on an acreage equivalent to 10 percent of the wheat base.

Implementation of discretionary provisions relating to payments in commodities and other contractual provisions will be announced later.

Individual producers will be notified of their farm acreage bases and program yields by their county Agricultural Sabilization and Conservation Service offices.

Haying and grazing will be permitted on acreage conservation reserve land at the request of individual state ASC committees. However, haying or grazing will not be permitted on the acreage during the five principal growing months as designated by county ASC committees. Block also approved a standby measure authorizing, in the event of a natural disaster, implementation of emergency haying and grazing privileges. Approval of the emergency privileges would be made as needed on a county-by-county basis.

#

USDA ALLOWS IRRADIATION OF FRESH PORK FOR TRICHINA CONTROL

WASHINGTON, Jan. 14—Starting tomorrow the U.S. Department of Agriculture will permit low-dose irradiation of fresh pork to control trichina if products are properly labeled, a USDA official said today.

"Only a small amount of the nation's fresh pork is likely to be irradiated in the near future," said Donald L. Houston, administrator of USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service. "One company has applied for approval and has received technical assistance, but has not yet satisfied the full range of USDA inspection requirements.

"Irradiation does not make food radioactive," said Houston. "Irradiation at a federally inspected plant, within the approved dose range, would sterilize any trichinae that might be present, preventing them from reproducing inside the human body to cause trichinosis even if they survived cooking.

Houston cautioned that the approved radiation dose is not strong enough to inactivate common bacteria that may be present on fresh pork and in the home environment. Therefore, careful handling—using clean hands and utensils—and thorough cooking will still be necessary to prevent foodborne illness other than trichinosis.

"USDA believes that consumers should be fully informed when food has been irradiated," Houston said. "Therefore, USDA plans to require appropriate labeling on irradiated fresh pork and on meat and poultry products that contain irradiated pork."

Labels will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, according to Houston. USDA plans to approve labeling terms such as "irradiated" or "treated with ionizing radiation," he said. USDA also may allow an irradiation logo to supplement required labeling statements.

Although food irradiation is technically a process, it is legally a food additive, explained Houston. Thus, its use on fresh pork had to be approved by first the Food and Drug Administration and then by USDA.

"Some consumers have been expressed concern about the chemical safety of irradiated foods," Houston said. "In July 1985, FDA approved 0.3 to 1.0 kiloGray—30 to 100 kilorads—of gamma irradiation to control the trichina parasite. At that time, FDA reiterated that at doses of 100 krad and below, the difference between an irradiated food and a comparable non-irradiated food is so small as to make the foods indistinguishable with respect to safety. This action enabled USDA to consider the issue. USDA agrees with FDA findings."

The new regulation responds to an industry petition. It allows low-dose irradiation of fresh pork carcasses and cuts, such as pork roasts and pork chops. It does not allow irradiation of processed products since these products were not considered by FDA in its approval of irradiation as a food additive. At this time it cannot be used as an

alternate to curing, canning, or commercial freezing of fresh pork for trichina destruction, although USDA intends to consider such use in the future.

USDA-approved quality control programs will be required to assure that fresh pork receives the proper dose of gamma irradiation and is not re-irradiated.

Comments on the final regulation should be identified as responses to Docket 85-016F and sent, in duplicate, within 60 days to FSIS Hearing Clerk, USDA, Room 3803-S, Washington, D.C. 20250.

The regulation is scheduled to be published in the Jan. 15 Federal Register. Background materials are available from USDA, FSIS Information Office, Room 1160-S, Washington, D.C. 20250.

FSIS assures that meat products are safe, wholesome and accurately labeled.

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REVISIONS IN USDA DOCKAGE CERTIFICATION DISCUSSED AT DENVER PUBLIC MEETING

WASHINGTON, Jan. 14—A public meeting held by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Federal Grain Inspection Service Jan. 7 in Denver, Colo., generated a range of viewpoints on dockage certification of wheat, a USDA official said today.

FGIS Administrator Kenneth Gilles said 24 separate agricultural groups, foreign buyers, and individuals at the meeting commented on dockage certification issues. There was general agreement, he said, that FGIS dockage certification procedures, in view of present technology, should more accurately describe the dockage content in wheat. The majority of comments supported early action to change the standards to allow certification of wheat dockage to the nearest 0.1 percent.

Additional comments ranged from a recommendation that dockage and foreign material be combined within the present standards for foreign material to a recommendation that the present standards be retained.

Gilles said FGIS plans to publish proposed changes in dockage certification standards in the Federal Register after the agency has studied the comments generated at the meeting.

#

U.S.-CANADIAN HORTICULTURAL ADVISORY GROUP ESTABLISHED

OTTAWA, Jan. 16—Canadian Agriculture Minister John Wise and U.S. Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block today announced the establishment of the U.S.-Canadian Horticultural Industry Advisory Group which will work to resolve problems in two-way trade in fruits and vegetables between the two countries.

The announcement came at the conclusion of a day of talks on a broad range of farm policy, commodity development and other agricultural issues. The two countries hold ministerial-level talks semi-annually.

"This new group will provide a basis for useful dialogue on horticultural issues on both sides of our borders," said Block. Wise added "the meetings will present a much needed opportunity to dispell certain misconceptions and remove irritants."

Twelve Canadian and U.S. horticultural industry experts were appointed to the advisory group. Representing the Canadian side will be: Michel Legault, Syndicat des Producteurs d'Oignons du Quebec; Richard Bullock, British Columbia Fruit Growers Association; John Kuhl, Vegetable Growers Association of Manitoba; Tony Csinos, Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers; Laurie Hennigar, Nova Scotia Fruit Growers Assn.; Gerry Long, Ontario Apple Marketing Commission; and Ken Hunter, Agriculture Canada.

Members from the United States include: Christian E. Schlect, Northwest Horticultural Council; George Sorn, Florida Fruit and Vegetable Assn.; Gary K. Ball, Idaho Potato Commission; Leonard K. Lobred, National Food Processors Assn.; Roger Stroh, United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Assn.; Michael J. Stuart, Western Growers Assn.; and Gilbert E. Sindelar, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Wise and Block also discussed a U.S. proposal to reduce the number of border entry points in Maine available to Canadian potato exporters.

The two agricultural leaders were joined by Minister of State for the Canadian Wheat Board Charles Mayer for talks on grain-related issues, including mutual concerns regarding international grain markets, the impact of Canada's Western Grain Transportation Act on the United States and the impact of the new U.S. farm bill.

The leaders exchanged information and views on their respective agricultural price and income support measures and the susceptibility of those measures to countervailing trade actions under respective legislation. Wise and Block stated that "the United States and Canada need to work together more closely on the reduction of trade-distorting measures in international markets, such as export subsidies and import barriers." They also said that the two countries should "intensify their efforts to seek fairer cross-border trade."

Other points covered during the talks included U.S.-Canadian animal health regulations and continued U.S. restraints on imports of certain sugar-containing products.

#

USDA AMENDING GRAIN INDUSTRY RECORD-KEEPING REQUIREMENTS

WASHINGTON, Jan. 16—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Federal Grain Inspection Service is implementing a significant reduction in federal record-keeping requirements by grain merchandisers and elevator owners and operators, a USDA official announced today.

"After an in-depth review of grain record-keeping requirements, it was determined the regulations could be streamlined and condensed to provide regulatory relief while still serving their intended purpose," said FGIS Administrator Kenneth A. Gilles.

"The new rules eliminate complex preparation and maintenance requirements, and prohibit the unauthorized disclosure of business information," Gilles said.

This final rule on record-keeping requirements was published Jan. 15 in the Federal Register. For further information on the new requirements, contact Lewis Lebakken Jr., Information Resources Management Branch, Federal Grain Inspection Service, USDA, Room 0667-S, Washington, D.C. 20250; telephone (202) 382-1738.

#

TEST TELLS IF GROUND BEEF IS FRESH

WASHINGTON, Jan. 16—Ground beef sold in bulk can now be tested by buyers for restaurants, supermarket chains and the military—before they buy—to quickly estimate how long hamburger will stay fresh, said A. Douglas King, Jr., of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

King, a chemist for USDA's Agricultural Research Service, said ground beef's freshness is determined by measuring lactic acid in the meat. Lactic acid is a compound that occurs naturally in animals and is also produced by bacteria. High levels of the acid indicate the beef will spoil quickly, he said, and have a bad odor.

He said the test, which has a patent pending, is "cheaper, simpler, and faster" than other methods for detecting possible early spoilage of hamburger.

Testing is done in one hour, compared to as many as nine days for other techniques. An analysis is run using instrumentation—high-performance liquid chromatography—that is available at commercial laboratories.

King said the test is used in the first of two stages of processing ground beef: Meat is first coarsely ground, then kept refrigerated in large, oxygen-free plastic bags until needed, which may be as long as several weeks. Later, when a supermarket or other outlet buys these "chubs" or "keeper" packs, the coarse grind is converted to the familiar fine grind that has a shorter shelf life.

Bacteria that produce lactic acid thrive in the oxygen-free pack and are probably beneficial at low levels, King said. But lactic acid can build up if the beef is kept in oxygen-free storage too long, and can cause what is known as "sour odor spoilage," according to the chemist.

King and former co-worker Patricia Nassos-Stalder, developed the test at the engineering and food science research laboratory of the agency's Western Research Center, Albany, Calif.

#

Backgrounder

U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Information

BACKGROUNDER—CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM, JAN. 13, 1986

The Conservation Reserve Program is authorized by the Food Security Act of 1985. The program has the potential of removing from cultivation—for a decade or more—as many as 40-45 million acres of highly erodible land. The U.S. Department of Agriculture will implement the program during the 1986 crop year.

Purpose

The conservation reserve was established as a voluntary program to help farmers prevent or control the critical soil erosion now occurring on more than a third of America's cropland. Unchecked, soil erosion would reduce the nation's long-term capability to produce food and fiber. In addition, off-farm costs of dealing with sedimentation caused by soil erosion are estimated at more than $2 billion a year.

The reserve also will help adjust the production of some agricultural commodities currently in surplus—cotton, sorghum, wheat, corn, soybeans and small grains. Retiring acres will help trim these surpluses, even though lands eligible for the reserve are generally marginally productive.

Other goals include improving water quality, creating better habitat for fish and wildlife, and providing income support for farmers.

Eligible Land

The Soil Conservation Service distinguishes eight classes of land based on the risk of land damage or the difficulty of land use; generally, the lower the number class, the better the land. The reserve aims to remove from farming:

—Any cropland in capability classes VI, VII or VIII, because it is considered too steep or shallow to farm.
—Cropland in capability classes II-V that is eroding at more than twice the rate at which soil forms (4 to 5 tons per acre per year on the average for deep soils, and much more slowly for shallower soils).

To be eligible, the land must have been used to produce an annual crop any two of the five years, 1981 through 1985.

Of 421 million acres of cropland in the United States as of 1982, SCS estimates that 87 million acres in classes II-V are eroding at at least twice the tolerable level. Another 17 million acres are in classes VI, VII and VIII. The total land eligible for the reserve, therefore, is 104 million acres. USDA hopes to retire 40-45 million acres through the program.

These lands are in every region of the United States, and occur as parts of farms and fields. In most cases, soil erosion cannot be held or reduced below the tolerable level on land classes VI-VIII as long as they are cultivated, even if conservation practices are applied and maintained.

How the Program Works

Farmers may sign a ten year contract with USDA under which they agree to take eligible land out of annual crop production and put it into perennial grass, wildlife plantings, windbreaks or trees. USDA's role is threefold: to provide annual rental payments, based on a bid, in cash or commodities; to cover half the expense of establishing permanent cover on the land; and to provide technical help through SCS, conservation districts, the Forest Service, state forestry agencies and others.

Limits

Payments to individual producers may not exceed $50,000 per year, exclusive of other USDA payments. To ease the possible effect on agriculture-related industries or businesses, not more than 25 percent of the land in any county can be bid into the program except where the secretary of agriculture determines the economic impact would be minimal. During the contract period, farmers may not reap commercial benefits from Reserve land through haying, grazing, or seed or tree production.

Costs

USDA expects outlays for the program of some $5 billion over the first five years, mostly for rental payments. These costs would be offset to a large degree by reduced payments through the Commodity Credit Corporation as the land is removed from commodity programs.

Effects

Expected environmental benefits of a 40-million-acre Reserve include:

- —Some 750 million tons of soil erosion will not occur on the retired lands every year they are not cultivated.
- —Water quality will improve through an annual reduction of 211 million tons of sediment reaching streams and other surface waters.
- —The amount of pesticides applied annually will be reduced by about 60 million pounds.
- —Fish and wildlife habitat quality will improve significantly.
- —Trees on 4-5 million more acres will provide many natural resource values, future income for landowners and economic value to communities.

Agencies Involved

The Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service will verify cropping history; receive, rank, and accept or reject bids; sign contracts with producers; and verify compliance.

The Soil Conservation Service will determine eligibility of the land, assist farmers in preparing conservation plans and help install planned conservation practices.

The Extension Service will lead an intensive public information and education effort to inform landowners about the reserve and encourage their early participation. Extension specialists and county agents will help answer or refer program questions.

The Forest Service and cooperating state forestry agencies will help plan for tree planting, where appropriate, and help install planned practices involving trees.

Local soil and water conservation districts will approve all conservation plans for lands to be retired under the reserve.

In most cases, these agencies will use established work arrangements and procedures in order to reduce confusion, maintain efficiency and hold down overall costs. Landowners may obtain further information from any of the agencies.

To ensure the broadest possible program benefits, USDA also will consult with land grant universities, state soil and water agencies, state fish and wildlife agencies, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other appropriate agencies.

Comparison With Earlier Reserves

Only the most highly erodible lands in the nation will be retired under the Conservation Reserve Program. An earlier program, the Soil Bank of the 1950s, was intended mainly to adjust supply to demand by taking any type of land out of production. There was no attempt by USDA to limit the lands enrolled to highly erodible or otherwise fragile acres. Restoration of vegetative cover or other conservation practices were only secondary purposes. Thus the conservation reserve will reduce onsite and offsite damage from soil erosion more sharply than the Soil Bank.

Expected Signup

USDA hopes to begin the program within 60 days after enactment. A nationwide signup will be held as early as possible for the 1986 crop year. Upwards of 340,000 agricultural producers are expected to visit ASCS offices during that time, and many will sign an intent to bid land into the program. A second signup, for the 1987 crop year, will take place in summer 1986.

To sign up, producers will designate the fields or parts of fields to be included, estimate the acreage by designated field, provide information on crops grown on each field during the 1981-1985 period and the conservation practices applied or used, and submit a bid for the annual rental payment for the designated acres. Representatives of ASCS, SCS and state forestry agencies will be available to help producers with the paperwork. Producers will sign a contract, similar to long-term agreements that are used in the Agricultural Conservation Program.

Annual compliance with the contract will be reviewed by the agency providing the technical help until all conservation work is done, and then by ASCS spot

checking. Annual rental payments will be made after Oct. 1 each year (unless paid in advance).

Returning to Production

A producer may elect to return the land to production at any time by repaying the government with interest all of its costs for annual rental and establishing cover. In the event of national need, the secretary may declare that any producer who wants to return the land to annual crops may do so without penalty.

When a contract expires, a producer will be free to return the land to production. Under other provisions of the food security act, however, the producer will not be eligible to participate in certain USDA farm or commodity programs unless he or she agrees to follow a conservation plan approved by the local soil and water conservation district.

Acres Eligible for Conservation Reserve Program

*(Source: 1982 National Resources Inventory)**

STATE	ACRES
Alabama	1,341,500
Arizona	68,200
Arkansas	896,100
California	754,200
Colorado	4,925,900
Connecticut	54,200
Delaware	54,600
Florida	525,100
Georgia	1,283,200
Hawaii	67,000
Idaho	2,407,600

STATE	ACRES
Illinois	4,782,000
Indiana	2,520,800
Iowa	10,835,000
Kansas	4,527,900
Kentucky	1,824,300
Louisiana	449,700
Maine	131,300
Maryland	362,900
Massachusetts	48,100
Michigan	1,140,500
Minnesota	5,087,200
Mississippi	1,516,800
Missouri	5,262,400
Montana	7,118,000
Nebraska	4,296,700
Nevada	197,500
New Hampshire	23,500
New Jersey	212,900
New Mexico	717,600
New York	858,300
North Carolina	1,602,300
North Dakota	4,278,700
Ohio	1,630,400
Oklahoma	2,230,200
Oregon	1,471,600
Pennsylvania	1,579,100
Rhode Island	3,500
South Carolina	342,900
South Dakota	2,877,900
Tennessee	2,048,200
Texas	14,511,100
Utah	373,200
Vermont	58,200
Virginia	841,500

STATE	ACRES
Washington	2,336,100
West Virginia	220,700
Wisconsin	2,659,600
Wyoming	379,300
Caribbean (Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands)	232,500
Total	103,968,100

* The program also will be offered in Alaska. No data on eligible acres is currently available.

Major Conservation Features of the Food Security Act of 1985:

The Conservation Reserve Program was authorized by the Food Security Act of 1985, signed by President Ronald Reagan, Dec. 23, 1985. Basic authority for the conservation reserve is in Subtitle D of Title XII of the act.

Sodbuster Subtitle B will make agricultural producers ineligible for benefits of certain USDA programs if they bring highly erodible land into cultivation, unless they do so under a conservation system approved by the local soil and water conservation district or by the secretary. If highly erodible land is already being cultivated in the 1981-1985 crop years, the producers will need to begin applying an approved conservation plan not later than Jan. 1, 1990, and complete its implementation by 1995.

Swampbuster Subtitle C will make agricultural producers ineligible for benefits of certain USDA programs if they produce agricultural commodities on wetland that has been substantially altered or drained for that purpose.

Appeals

Subtitle E will require the secretary to establish a procedure under which adverse determinations mad under the new conservation provisions may be appealed.

Water

Subtitle F, Section 1251, will authorize the secretar to formulate plans and give technical assistance to property owners, state and local agencies, and interstate river basin commissions to protect quality and quantity of subsurface water, reduce flooding hazards and control salinity. The secretary is to rep to Congress on these matters by Feb. 15, 1987.

Extension of Resource Studies

Subtitle F, Section 1252, amends the Soil and Wat Resources Conservation Act of 1977 to require SC to conduct resource conservation appraisals every years instead of every five, and to do them through the year 2005.

Farmland Protection

Subtitle F, Section 1255, will permit governors of states with laws to protect farmland from urban development to file suit in cases where the federal government may not be following procedures of th Federal Farmland Protection Policy Act (part of th 1981 farm bill).

Conservation Easements

Section 1318 of Title XIII authorizes the secretary acquire and retain easements in wetland or highly erodible land for conservation, recreation and wildl uses for periods of at least 50 years, where the lan security for a Farmers Home Administration loan the farmer cannot repay. Part of the debt could the be canceled.

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NEW PROCESS CONVERTS RICE BRAN INTO NUTRITIOUS FOOD

WASHINGTON, Jan. 17—Rice bran may yield nutritious new foods, such as flakes high in vitamins, minerals, protein and fiber, and a natural oil rich in vitamin E, as a result of U.S. Department of Agriculture research.

That outlook for rice bran, which contains about 20 percent oil, is based on a new process that a team of USDA scientists developed. They found that it is possible to prevent the oil in rice bran from deteriorating, a shortcoming that occurs once the layers of bran around white rice kernels are removed in the milling process.

When the oil deteriorates it is broken down by enzymes, causing the bran to become inedible and making recovery of the oil for food use too costly. Currently, rice bran in this country is used mainly as a high-protein ingredient in livestock feed.

Rice bran and its oil are "two of the world's most underutilized food resources," said Robin M. Saunders, of USDA's Agricultural Research Service, Albany, Calif., who led the research team. Some 30 to 40 million tons of bran containing six to eight million tons of oil are produced annually around the world, he said.

The problem of the oil breaking down has concerned world food experts for at least 25 years, and is one reason why the Agency for International Development funded the research.

The USDA team is the first to come up with a solution to the problem that is "economically feasible," according to Saunders.

"We can now prevent this deterioration by running the bran through what is known as a crop cooker or extruder," he said. "This machine creates enough heat, entirely through friction, to destroy the powerful enzymes that would normally break down the oil."

Overseas, he said, the process "could make rice bran oil a major source of cooking or salad oil in developing countries where rice is a staple." Some of these countries do not have adequate sources of oil.

In this country, the technique is stimulating development of new rice-bran based foods for consumers, he said. One California and one Texas company are already using the new process to make small, light, sweet-tasting bran flakes for a crunchy rice bran product and as a component of other breakfast cereals.

For U.S. industry, stabilized rice bran is projected to become a major export to Japan, Korea and other countries, he said.

#

NIGHT ATTACK ON HYDRILLA SUCCESSFUL

WASHINGTON, Jan. 21—Shining light on hydrilla at night has cut reproduction of this extremely fast-growing aquatic weed by 50 percent at an experimental site on the Potomac River, a U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist said today after analyzing results of tests run last year.

"We hit hydrilla when it was vulnerable," said Lars W.J. Anderson of USDA's Agricultural Research Service. He ran the lighting experiments on the Potomac last August and September.

"Our strategy was to shine overhead lights on these plants at a time when they need uninterrupted stretches of darkness to form reproductive buds," he said. "Next time, if we start earlier in the year, we might get even better results, such as a 75 percent to 95 percent drop in reproduction."

Anderson was able to reduce formation of reproductive buds by 95 percent in tests during the past two years at the agency's Aquatic Weeds Control Laboratory, Davis, Calif.

He found the 50 percent hydrilla drop in the Potomac after analyzing samples from the Belle Haven Marina, Alexandria, Va. He said small quartz floodlights, mounted above the surface to shine on hydrilla for an hour each night, were more effective than underwater strands of lights.

If uncontrolled, dense mats of the hardy plant can entangle swimmers or boaters, snag fishing lines, and interfere with irrigation and flood control. Hydrilla can grow from two to four inches a day, forming 10 to 15-foot-long strands.

At marinas and other places where electricity is available, the night lighting technique could become one of the safest and cheapest methods yet tried for controlling hydrilla-infested waterways, Anderson said. Hydrilla has been reported in more than a dozen states, from Florida to California.

"The best use of the night lighting approach may be to combine it with other, more conventional techniques, such as mowing with mechanical harvesters, using divers to maneuver underwater vacuums to suction hydrilla from river bottoms, or applying herbicides," Anderson said.

"The lengthening of nights during summer and fall triggers formation of small, bulb-like reproductive buds known as tubers and turions," he explained. "Tubers form in the soil; turions grow on tips of shoots. In the fall, when the plant dies, the turions either fall off of the shoots or break off. They drift with the current and eventually sink to the bottom. The tubers remain in the soil. In the spring, both the tubers and the turions sprout and form new plants.

"If we can use night lighting for several years in a row, to counteract tuber and turion formation, we may be able to get the weed under control.

"Hydrilla can spread in other ways, such as from chopped pieces clipped off by an outboard motor. But, the newly established plants will eventually need to form tubers or turions in order to survive the winter and reproduce. That's where night lighting comes in."

The idea of using lighting to confuse plants and disrupt normal reproduction isn't new. It's a trick that's widely used to produce poinsettias, chrysanthemums, and other flowers at times of the year that these plants normally wouldn't be in bloom. The technique is based on what is known as photoperiodism, or the effects of the length of day on a plant's development.

#

FOREST SERVICE REGION RECEIVES GOLDEN SMOKEY BEAR AWARD

WASHINGTON, Jan. 22—The Pacific Southwest Region of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service received a Golden Smokey Bear award today for sustained outstanding national service in wildfire prevention.

Pacific Southwest Regional Forester Zane G. Smith received the award from Forest Service Associate Chief F. Dale Robertson, who said the Region is the first Forest Service unit ever to receive the prestigious award.

"The employees of the Pacific Southwest Region are leaders in the development and carrying out of aggressive and innovative fire prevention programs," said Robertson. "I am pleased that they have been recognized for the contributions they have made for the past 75 years to fire prevention."

The Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Program, symbolized by Smokey Bear, involves a national campaign to increase public awareness of the need to prevent forest fires. Recipients of the award are selected by the program's sponsors: The Advertising Council, Inc., The National Association of State Foresters, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service.

Among the Pacific Southwest Region's contributions to fire prevention are the development of effective fire prevention regulations, training programs that have been used as models for Forest Service and state agencies since the 1940's, the use of fire information officers trained to provide information to the public about serious fire situations and use of the media to promote the fire prevention message, and pioneering efforts in the development of the chainsaw spark arrestor. The spark arrestor consists of a screen mounted over the saw's muffler to contain sparks which could cause a fire.

"They have given much in the way of technology, people, and leadership to national and even international fire prevention activities," Robertson said.

This Golden Smokey Bear is one of only 34 such awards presented since the first award in 1958.

The award is a 9-inch golden statuette of Smokey Bear mounted on a walnut wood base which can be presented to more than one recipient each year. The sole winner in 1985 was the Boy Scouts of America.

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OUTLOOK VARIES FOR WATER SUPPLIES IN WEST

WASHINGTON, Jan. 24—A mixed pattern of rain and snow in the fall and early winter in the West may indicate varied streamflow in the region later this year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Commerce reported today.

Wilson Scaling, chief of USDA's Soil Conservation Service, said that fall precipitation was generally above normal over the Colorado, Rio Grande, Wyoming, and Great Basins. But precipitation was below normal over the Columbia and California Basins, and variable over the remaining western basins.

The agency's first snowpack measures of 1986 showed above-normal amounts in most of the Rio Grande, Arkansas, Upper Colorado, Platte River, and Great Basins. In the Columbia and Missouri Basins, the agency found snowpacks below normal. In the central Arizona mountains, snowpacks were practically nonexistent.

Scaling said early-season forecasts are for the Colorado River to produce 142 percent of its average flow into Lake Powell; Rio Grande River, 150 percent of average; and Arkansas River, 118 percent of average.

Reservoir storage remains very high in the West except for a few places in the Columbia and Missouri Basins, he said. The Great Salt Lake is expected to peak slightly below last year's level.

Specialists from the Soil Conservation Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, analyze data on snow and precipitation and issue monthly forecasts from January through May of runoff and water supplies for Alaska and 11 other western states.

The forecasts give water users in the region, including cities and towns, advance information for planning water use the rest of the year. Snow accumulated during the winter and spring provides about 75 percent of the West's yearly water supply.

#

USDA POSTPONES TOBACCO REFERENDUM AND BURLEY TOBACCO PROCLAMATION

WASHINGTON, Jan. 24—Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block today postponed the marketing quota referendum for the 1986-1988 crops of flue-cured tobacco scheduled for January 27-30, and the proclamation of the national marketing quota for the 1986-1988 crops of burley tobacco.

Congress has passed legislation which provides that the marketing quota referendum for flue-cured tobacco may be held within 30 days after the announcement of a new 1986 flue-cured national marketing quota or no later than March 15, 1986. Also, the announcement of national marketing quotas for burley tobacco for the 1986-1988 marketing year may be made not later than March 1, 1986.

The Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 states that whenever national marketing quotas are proclaimed for flue-cured tobacco the Secretary shall conduct a referendum of farmers within 30 days of the announcement to determine whether they favor or oppose marketing quotas. The Act also requires the Secretary to announce the national burley quota by February 1.

Since legislation is under consideration which may lead to the enactment of new laws governing flue-cured and burley tobacco, the Secretary has decided to postpone the flue-cured referendum and the burley proclamation.

#

USDA ADOPTS NEW INSPECTION PROCEDURE FOR YOUNG CHICKENS

WASHINGTON, Jan. 28—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is implementing a new method of inspection in poultry slaughter plants which will continue its inspection modernization program and reduce costs, a USDA official announced today.

"Since 1978, we have been making the inspection of chickens more efficient without sacrificing effectiveness," said Donald L. Houston, administrator of USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service. "This

new procedure is made possible by the knowledge we gained during the development of other new poultry inspection systems.

"Our budget situation is an added impetus to implement the new procedure now," said Houston. "Present resources do not allow us to meet the current, nor the anticipated, need for poultry inspection that is a result of growing consumer demand. Therefore, to assure that we have a sound inspection system in meeting the needs of an expanding industry, we are implementing the new procedure immediately."

The new procedure will be mandatory in poultry plants currently operating under Modified Traditional Inspection, which accounts for the vast majority of plants that slaughter young chickens.

The current Modified Traditional Inspection procedure divides the inspection process among three inspectors. The first inspector, using a mirror, checks the outside of each carcass. The other two inspectors check the inside cavity and the internal organs. The trimming of bruises and other defects is done by plant employees under the direction of the inspector.

The new procedure, called the Streamlined Inspection System, eliminates the first inspector. Instead, depending on the size of the plant, one or two inspectors are used and each is responsible for checking a whole bird. In addition, plant employees identify and trim bruises and other defects, allowing the USDA inspectors to concentrate on detecting diseases and other abnormalities. USDA will monitor the adequacy of the trimming and processing operations by reviewing data from a statistical sampling of the carcasses to assure the product meets regulatory standards for wholesomeness and acceptability.

"In addition to streamlining inspection procedures, USDA's goal in this modernization effort has been to focus inspection on eliminating diseased and abnormal carcasses while increasing the plant's responsibility for removing manufacturing defects such as bruises and broken wings, which do not pose a health hazard," Houston said.

The shifting of responsibility for trimming to the plant makes the Streamlined Inspection System similar to the New Line Speed inspection system for young chickens implemented in 1984. However, that system is designed for high-production plants that run lines at 91 birds inspected per minute using three inspectors. The new procedure,

when operating with two inspectors, maintains the current Modified Traditional Inspection linespeed of 70 birds inspected per minute.

Houston said USDA recently has been able to modernize its poultry inspection procedures because of the broiler industry's success in controlling diseases, chemical residues and other contaminants.

Annual poultry production was up about 5 percent in 1985. Houston said USDA anticipates a similar increase in 1986.

The interim rule is scheduled to be published in the Jan. 29 Federal Register. USDA is soliciting comments on the regulation to determine what changes might be needed before the interim rule is made permanent, Houston said.

Requirements for facilities and equipment for the new procedure are being proposed in a separate regulation, which is also scheduled to be published in the Jan. 29 Federal Register. Meanwhile, plants will be allowed to use their current facilties and equipment until that rule becomes effective.

Comments on both the interim and proposed rules may be submitted in duplicate to: FSIS Hearing Clerk, 3803 South Bldg., USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250. Comments on the interim rule are due by March 31. Comments on the proposal are due by Feb. 28.

The Food Safety and Inspection Service is responsible for assuring that poultry products prepared for sale in interstate commerce are safe, wholesome and accurately labeled.

#

USDA RECOMMENDS HONEY RESEARCH, PROMOTION AND INFORMATION ORDER

WASHINGTON, Jan. 29—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has recommended issuing a national honey research, promotion and consumer information order, a USDA official announced today.

Joseph A. Gribbin, an official with USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said the recommendation is based on evidence presented at public hearings held July 16 in Washington, D.C., and July 30 in Denver, Colo., to consider the industry-proposed order.

Under the order, producers and importers of 6,000 or more pounds of honey and honey products per year would finance honey research, promotion and information activities through production and import assessments. The assessment rate would be one cent per pound for the first year of the order, and could not be increased more than one-half cent per year thereafter. A maximum assessment rate would be set at four cents per pound.

The program is authorized under the Honey Research, Promotion and Consumer Information Act of 1984. A producer or importer who did not wish to support the program could obtain an assessment refund upon written request to the Honey Board, Gribbin said.

The Honey Board, a 13-member group of honey producers, packers, importers and a public representative appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture, would administer the program. A majority of the board members would be domestic honey producers. Responsibility would include recommendation of research, promotion and consumer education projects for approval by the Secretary.

Gribbin said USDA will accept public comments on its recommendation to issue the order until Feb. 27. USDA will consider all public comments received in making a final decision on the proposed order, he said.

If USDA makes a final decision to establish the order, eligible producers and importers will then be able to vote on the order in a referendum. To become effective, the order would need approval of at least two-thirds of those voting in the referendum, or by a majority of those voting if two-thirds of the total volume of honey accounted for in the referendum is represented.

The recommended decision was published today in the Federal Register. Public comments may be submitted through Feb. 27 to the Hearing Clerk, Agricultural Marketing Service, Room 1079-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250. Copies of the proposal, the recommended decision and other information may be obtained from Ronald L. Cioffi, Fruit and Vegetable Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA, Room 2523-S, Washington, D.C. 20250; telephone (202) 447-5053.

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USDA ANNOUNCES 1986-CROP RICE LOAN AND TARGET LEVELS

WASHINGTON, Jan. 29—Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block today set the 1986-crop rice national average loan and purchase rate at $7.20 per hundredweight and the target price at $11.90 per hundredweight.

Block previously has announced a required 35 percent acreage reduction for participants in the 1986 rice program.

Additional details of this year's rice program will be released soon.

#

USDA DESCRIBES GENERIC PIK PROVISIONS FOR ADVANCE DEFICIENCY, DIVERSION PAYMENTS

WASHINGTON, Jan. 29—Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block today announced details of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's advance deficiency and diversion "generic PIK" provisions, under which producers may receive certificates for commodities in lieu of cash payments for program participation under the Food Security Act of 1985.

Block said that USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation will issue payment-in-kind certificates that are generic, meaning that the certificate will not be commodity specific. The certificates will be redeemable by producers for any regular, special or farmer-owned reserve loan commodity, and by commercial certificate holders for any CCC-owned commodity.

PIK certificates will be issued in the monetary amount due the producer and will be available for issuance by county Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation offices beginning May 1, Block said. Each producer will have until Sept. 30, 1986, or until the maturity date of his loan, whichever is earlier, to request issuance of his certificate and to market the certificate.

Producers holding commodities pledged as loan collateral at signup must redeem that loan collateral (except peanuts and tobacco) to satisfy their PIKs. Producers may elect to use any commodity they hold under loan as a payment-in-kind. The quantity of the loan collateral that must

be redeemed for PIK purposes will be determined using the per-unit value as announced by the CCC on the day the certificate is presented for redemption.

Producers who do not hold commodities under loan or whose commodities under loan are insufficient to satisfy their PIK entitlement may sell their certificates: a commercial entity who may in turn redeem them only for CCC-owned commodities; another producer who may use the certificate to redeem his commodity loans; or producers who are co-op members who may designate an approved co-op to market their PIKs.

Commercial holders of PIK certificates may redeem them at any time but before Dec. 31, 1986. Commercial holders may redeem PIK certificates with the Kansas City Commodity Office (KCCO), 8930 Ward Parkway, Kansas City, Mo.

KCCO will make available a listing of locations of CCC-owned commodities for in-store delivery and the applicable redemption prices. Lot selection will be on a first-come, first-served basis as established through the Western Union Easylink system.

Commercial certificate holders who have CCC-owned inventory may request redemption of certificates for commodities at their own storing locations even though the commodity may not have been listed as being available by KCCO. CCC reserves the right to require warehousemen who have CCC commodities to take delivery at their own warehouses when redeeming certificates.

#

USDA ANNOUNCES ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS FOR 1986 WHEAT, FEED-GRAIN PROGRAMS

WASHINGTON, Jan. 29—Signup for the 1986 wheat and feed-grain programs will be held March 3 through April 11, Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block announced today.

Other farm program provisions announced today include:

— Producers may request 100 percent of their diversion payments and 40 percent of their projected deficiency payments when they sign up.

— Payment rates for the 2-1/2 percent paid land diversion for wheat and feed-grain producers have been established (per bushel) at $.57 for barley, $.73 for corn, $.36 for oats, $.65 for sorghum and $1.10 for wheat.

— The payment rate for the additional paid diversion option for winter-wheat producers is $2.00 per bushel in accordance with the Food Security Act of 1985.

Estimated per bushel deficiency payment rates are: barley, $.95; corn, $1.03; oats, $.45; sorghum, $.98; and wheat, $1.83.

— Seventy-five percent of the advance deficiency payments will be paid in cash during signup, and the remaining 25 percent will be paid as payment-in-kind beginning May 1. Producers will have from May 1 through Sept. 30 to request the PIK portion of their advance deficiency and/or diversion payments.

— Producers who have price support loans—regular, special or farmer-owned reserve—on any commodity on the day the advance payment is requested must make that loan collateral available to satisfy their PIK. The quantity of the loan collateral that must be redeemed for PIK purposes will depend on the value, as determined by the Commodity Credit Corporation, of the commodity under loan at the time PIK is received.

— Producers who do not have commodities under loan, or producers whose commodities under loan are insufficient to meet their PIK entitlements, will be issued negotiable certificates in the net remaining monetary amount due them.

— The certificates may be sold to others, but are redeemable only for CCC-owned commodities. The certificates may be used to purchase commodities in CCC's inventory at a value determined by CCC.

— A producer who accepts an advance payment, but who later does not comply with program provisions, must refund the amount of the advance payment with interest.

It is the USDA's intention to require cross compliance for 1986 crops of wheat, feed grains, cotton and rice. However, the Administration will accept a technical amendment to the 1985 Act dealing only with cross compliance. If cross compliance is made discretionary for all 1986 crops, it will not be required for that crop year.

— Bases and yields are being determined in accordance with the provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985. Producers who believe that the bases and yields for their farms are incorrectly established may file an appeal with their local county ASC committees through the end of the signup period.

— Contracts signed by program participants will be considered binding and will provide for liquidated damages for failure to comply with program requirements.

Farmers may sign up for the 1986 farm programs at their local Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service offices.

#

USDA ANNOUNCES PROVISIONS OF CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Jan. 29—Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block today announced that signup for the Conservation Reserve Program will take place March 3 through March 14 at Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service county offices.

Block said approximately 69.5 million acres will be eligible in the 1986 crop year for entry into the program, a provision of the Food Security Act of 1985 that will take highly erodible land out of farming for 10 years and place it into trees or other permanent vegetative cover. Enrollment of approximately five million acres is expected in 1986.

Block said USDA's Soil Conservation Service will determine the classification or erosion levels of land. All Class 6, 7 and 8 land is eligible along with any land in Classes 2 through 5 that is eroding at three times the tolerance level.

Producers wishing to put land into the program must provide a cropping history covering the years 1981 through 1985, Block said. The land must have been planted or considered to have been planted during that period (including land in the Acreage Conservation Reserve or set-aside programs, or land that was in the prevented-planting category). Set-aside or diverted acres are not eligible for the Conservation Reserve Program. Reserve acreage will be over and above amounts needed to qualify for price support programs.

Block said producers must submit bids for annual rental payments at the time of application. There will be 50 percent cost-sharing on conservation cover practices. Payments will be either in cash or negotiable (PIK) certificates. There is a $50,000 per person per year limit on annual rental payments, but not on cost shares.

Bases, quotas and allotments will be reduced by the ratio of cropland on the farm to the amount put into the program. The producer will choose which bases, quotas or allotments will be reduced over the life of the contract and this history will be preserved over the life of the contract.

County Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service and Soil Conservation Service offices will have more information before signup begins, Block said, and he urged producers to contact these offices for further details or assistance in determining their eligibility.

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United States Department of Agriculture

Office of Information

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USDA ANNOUNCES 1986 ACREAGE ALLOTMENTS FOR SIX KINDS OF TOBACCO

WASHINGTON, Jan. 31—Acting Secretary of Agriculture John R. Norton III today said the 1985 national factors and acreage allotments for six kinds of tobacco will be as follows:

— Factors that apply to eligible old-farm allotments for Virginia fire-cured, Virginia sun-cured and cigar-binder (types 51-52) tobaccos remain unchanged from 1985.

— The factor for Kentucky-Tennessee fire-cured tobacco is 0.875.

— The factor for dark air-cured tobacco is 0.75.

— The factor for cigar-filler and binder (types 42-44 and 53-55) tobaccos is 0.80.

Norton said allotments will be reduced for farms that in recent years have produced less than 75 percent of their allotments. Reductions are provided in accordance with current legislation, and will bring farm allotments in line with actual plantings, he said.

Norton also said that USDA will hold two concurrent mail referendums Feb. 24-27 for producers of Virginia sun-cured and cigar-binder tobaccos to determine whether growers want quotas for the marketing years 1986, 1987 and 1988. A two-thirds majority is required to continue quotas for each kind.

For Virginia sun-cured tobaccos, quotas were last proclaimed for the 1983-85 crops and were approved by a 91.6 percent majority. For cigar-binder tobaccos, grown in Connecticut and Massachusetts, quotas were last proclaimed in the 1985-87 crops but the quotas were rejected by growers in February 1985. Quotas for cigar-binder tobacco were last in effect in 1983.

The following table summarizes 1986 tobacco acreage allotments for six kinds of tobacco:

KINDS OF TOBACCO	ACRES (1986)	(1985)
Virginia fire-cured (type 21)	7,621	7,782
Kentucky-Tennessee fire-cured (types 22-23)	19,678	22,328
Dark air-cured (types 35-36)	6,166	8,195
Virginia sun-cured (type 37)	1,030	1,076
Cigar filler and binder (types 42-44 and 53-55)	9,185	11,554
Cigar binder (types 51-52)	1,961	2,028

Notices of the 1986 allotments for individual farms will be mailed soon to producers by local county Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Committees. The Committees will also mail referendum ballots to all known eligible producers. Any producer who does not receive a ballot may obtain one from their local county ASCS office.

#

CCC LOAN INTEREST RATE REMAINS 7-3/4 PERCENT

WASHINGTON, Feb. 3—Commodity loans disbursed in February by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation will carry a 7-3/4 percent interest rate, according to Acting Executive Vice President Milton Hertz.

The new rate, the same as in January, reflects the interest rate charged CCC by the U.S. Treasury in February, Hertz said.

#

USDA ANNOUNCES 1985-CROP UPLAND COTTON DEFICIENCY PAYMENT RATE

WASHINGTON, Feb. 3—Eligible upland cotton farmers will receive deficiency payments at the rate of 23.7 cents per pound on their 1985 production, according to Milton Hertz, acting administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

Hertz said the 1985 deficiency payment rate is equal to the difference between the target price of 81 cents per pound and the national average loan rate of 57.3 cents per pound. The Agriculture and Food Act of 1981 provides that the deficiency payment rate be the difference between the target price and the higher of the loan rate or the national average price received by farmers during the last calender year. The national average price was 54.7 cent. Since this is smaller than the 57.3 cent loan rate, the deficiency payment rate must be based on the difference between the target price and the loan rate.

Producers who participate in the 1985 upland cotton acreage reduction program are eligible to receive deficiency payments on the number of pounds equal to their cotton planted acres times their farm program yields. The Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service will begin making the 1985 deficiency payments during the latter part of February. Total payments are estimated to be about $800 million, Hertz said.

#

USDA RELEASES THE COST OF FOOD AT HOME FOR DECEMBER

WASHINGTON, Feb. 3—Here is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's monthly update of the weekly cost of food at home for December 1985.

Cost of food at home for a week in December 1985

	Food Plans			
	Thrifty	Low-cost	Moderate-cost	Liberal
Families:				
Family of 2 (20-50 years)	37.40	47.30	58.30	72.10
Family of 2 (51 years and over)	35.30	45.20	55.70	66.30
Family of 4 with preschool children	54.40	68.00	82.90	101.30
Family of 4 with elementary schoolchildren	62.40	79.80	99.80	119.80
Individuals in four-person families:				
Children:				
1-2 years	9.80	11.90	13.80	16.60
3-5 years	10.60	13.10	16.10	19.20
6-8 years	13.00	17.20	21.60	25.20
9-11 years	15.40	19.60	25.20	29.10
Females:				
12-19 years	16.10	19.30	23.40	28.20
20-50 years	16.10	20.10	24.40	31.10
51 and over	15.90	19.40	24.00	28.50
Males:				
12-14 years	16.20	22.30	27.70	32.50
15-19 years	16.80	23.10	28.60	33.10
20-50 years	17.90	22.90	28.60	34.40
51 and over	16.20	21.70	26.60	31.80

USDA's Human Nutrition Information Service computes the cost of food at home for four food plans—thrifty, low-cost, moderate-cost, and liberal.

Suzanne Harris, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Food and Consumer Services, said the plans consist of foods that provide well-balanced meals and snacks for a week.

In computing the costs, USDA assumes all food is bought at the store and prepared at home. Costs do not include alcoholic beverages, pet food, soap, cigarettes, paper goods, and other nonfood items bought at the store.

"USDA costs are only guides to spending," Harris said. "Families may spend more or less, depending on such factors as where they buy their food, how carefully they plan and buy, whether some food is produced at home, what foods the family likes, and how much food is prepared at home.

"Most families will find the moderate-cost or low-cost plan suitable, "she said. "The thrifty plan, which USDA uses to set the coupon allotment in the food stamp program, is for families who have tighter budgets. Families with unlimited resources might use the liberal plan."

To use the chart to estimate your family's food costs:

– For members eating all meals at home—or carried from home—use the amounts shown in the chart.

– For members eating some meals out, deduct 5 percent from the amount shown for each meal not eaten at home. Thus, for a person eating lunch out 5 days a week, subtract 25 percent, or one-fourth the cost shown.

– For guests, add 5 percent of the amount shown for the proper age group for each meal.

Costs in the second part of the chart are for individuals in four-person families. If your family has more or less than four, total the "individual" figures and make these adjustments, because larger families tend to buy and use food more economically than smaller ones:

– For a one-person family, add 20 percent.
– For a two-person family, add 10 percent.
– For a three-person family, add 5 percent.
– For a five- or six-person family, subtract 5 percent.
– For a family of seven or more, subtract 10 percent.

Details of the four family food plans are available from the Nutrition Education Division, Human Nutrition Information Service, USDA, Federal Building, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

#

1985-CROP RICE PRODUCERS TO RECEIVE DEFICIENCY PAYMENTS

WASHINGTON, Feb. 3—Eligible rice farmers will receive approximately $385 million in deficiency payments for the 1985 crop, a U.S. Department of Agriculture official said today.

Milton Hertz, acting administrator of the USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, said that about $185 million has already been received by rice producers who requested advance payments.

Deficiency payments are required under the 1985 rice program because average market prices received by farmers during the first five months (August through December) of the marketing year were below the established target price level of $11.90 per hundredweight.

The deficiency payment rate is based on the difference between the established target price and the higher of either the national weighted average market price for August through December or the established national loan rate.

The national weighted average market price for the first five months of the 1985 marketing year was $7.73 per hundredweight.

Eligible rice producers will be paid a deficiency payment rate of $3.90 per hundredweight for their 1985 crop, based on the difference between the $11.90 target price and the $8.00 loan rate, less any advance received. The deficiency payment rate is the maximum permitted by law.

Hertz said final rice payments will be issued through local ASCS offices as soon as possible.

#

USDA SAYS DAIRY TERMINATION PROGRAM PAYMENTS EXEMPT FROM SEQUESTERING

WASHINGTON, Feb. 7—The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced today that payments under the dairy termination program are not subject to sequestering under the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, known as the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings amendment.

Under Secretary of Agriculture Daniel Amstutz said these payments to milk producers under the dairy termination program will not be reduced because of the special rules applicable to the Commodity Credit Corporation under this Act.

Signup runs from Feb. 10 through Mar. 7 for the program which gives the dairy producer the opportunity to terminate milk production and dispose of the producers' whole herd by selling for slaughter or export all the female dairy cattle in which the producer has a financial interest.

Program provisions include the following:

— The incentive to terminate production is a payment based on the producer's history of milk marketings and the bid which is offered by the producer to cease production.

— Herd disposition will take place over an 18-month period. Program payments will be made over a 5-year period, beginning after disposition of the herd.

— If a producer's bid is accepted, the producer may not: engage in the production of milk for commercial use for 5 years; acquire or retain any interest in dairy cattle or the production of milk; acquire any milk production facility that becomes available because of the dairy termination program; or make available any milk production facility to any person for the purpose of producing milk.

— Those interested in participating in the program may submit a dollars-per-hundredweight-milk bid, based on their base period milk marketings, as adjusted if appropriate. They must offer evidence of the size and composition of their dairy herds (cows, heifers and calves) for three dates: Jan. 1, 1985; Jan. 1, 1986; and on the date that the bid is submitted.

— The producer's base period milk marketings will be the lesser of the commercial milk marketings in two 12-month periods—one beginning July 1984, the other beginning January 1985. Bids will be evaluated based on production during the base period and not on prospective production. There will be no upward adjustments.

— Producers may submit bids for one or more of the following disposal periods: April 1 - Aug. 31, 1986; Sept. 1, 1986 - Feb. 28, 1987; March 1 - Aug. 31, 1987. Disposal periods represent the times during

which producers contract to dispose of their female dairy cattle through either slaughter or export.

— Dairy cows and bred heifers sold by milk producers for slaughter must be slaughtered within 15 days from the date of sale, but not later than the final day of the contract disposal period. Other dairy cattle such as unbred heifers and calves sold for slaughter must be slaughtered within 6 months from the date of sale, but not later than the final day of the contract disposal period—except that for the initial disposal period, such slaughter must occur no later than Sept. 30, 1986.

— The contracting producer's dairy cattle must be branded as specified USDA. With the sale of the cattle, the producer must certify the following information on forms provided by the county Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service office: head of cattle by type (cows, heifers and calves); date of sale, weight and price received. Certifications must be signed by the seller, the buyer, and the slaughterer or exporter of the dairy cattle.

— Successful bidders may elect one of two options to receive cash payments under the program. Under the first option, producers may receive up to 80% of their payments in the first year following herd disposition with the remainder paid in four equal annual installments thereafter. This option would permit the producer to receive payments in five equal installments by choosing a 20% payment as the first payment. Under the second option, a producer may choose to receive, as an initial payment, up to 85% of the payment in the second year following the herd disposition with the remainder paid in three equal annual installments thereafter.

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